Preface

Peppi Taalas\textsuperscript{1} and Juha Jalkanen\textsuperscript{2}

The theme of this year’s conference was ‘Future-proof CALL: language learning as exploration and encounters’, which reflects an attempt to envision language teaching and learning futures in a changing world. What brought us together this year are shared concerns in relation to the sustainability of language learning and teaching in technology-rich contexts that are marked by ever-increasing complexity. The need to redefine our purpose and mission is as important as ever. Technology is affecting learning, teaching, researching – in fact, all aspects of our lives – in so many different ways.

The 26th EuroCALL conference was organised by the University of Jyväskylä (JYU) Language Campus and specifically the Language Centre. The conference gathered together close to 300 participants from 30 different countries for four days to present papers, attend presentations, workshops, symposia, meetings and – most importantly – network and socialise with colleagues and friends from near and far.

Our keynote speakers, who came more or less outside the field of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), explored and unpacked the notion of future proofing from multiple and thought-provoking angles.

Saku Tuominen started with the question ‘why’, asking why is it that we need to change education, or do we? One of his key messages was that the essence of education is to help people to flourish in life no matter what happens. The difficult question, however, for us educators to think about is what are the skills that are needed to flourish in life both today and tomorrow?

\textsuperscript{1} Eurocall conference chair, University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland; peppi.taalas@jyu.fi
\textsuperscript{2} Eurocall conference co-chair, University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland; juha.k.jalkanen@jyu.fi

Claire Kramsch, in turn, took a perspective of an applied linguist. She reminded us that technology is not only assisting language learning but it is transforming what we call a language. Touching upon the notions of identity, equality, and accessibility, Kramsch raised the question of ‘what is in our hands’ when the technology brings us together? What are the issues we should be talking about and what are the problems that need to be addressed? She also argued that the basic elements of language teaching have mainly remained the same despite the theoretical developments of language and language use. Reflecting on the burning issues in the recent political discussions, she also raised the question of whether language teaching is preparing students for the reality of language use and being a speaker of a certain language.

The Graham Davies keynote speaker, Mark Brown, talked about the future and what it has been considered to be in different times. He emphasised the difficulty of seeing what is relevant in amidst the rapidly changing environment of teaching and learning. The teachers’ mindsets play an important role in shaping the ways in which learning is organised. He said that the complexity makes it difficult to control the horizons of expectation and to know who to believe and whose ideas and initiatives to discard. He emphasised the need to establish a culture of vision and trust within which a strategic thinking can actually help us identify the voices we should hear and follow.

More information about the keynote addresses, as well as the full programme, may be found at the conference website: http://jyu.fi/eurocall2018.

The conference themes were organised around the following five main themes:

- Environments for interaction and learning.
- Pedagogies, practices, and cultures.
- CALL for future – beyond SLA.
- CALL and 21st century skills.
- Assessment for learning.

We received 275 submissions of which 184 were accepted to be presented as workshops, symposia, individual oral presentations, or posters. The oral presentations were categorised as research, research and development, reflective practice papers, along with presentations on European projects.

This collection of short papers in this volume is a very thorough view into the conference proper exhibiting the complexity and novelty of the field of CALL.
There are exciting new openings and a more profound exploration of theoretical underpinnings of the contemporary issues in teaching and learning, cross-cultural communication, mobile learning and the like.

We would like to thank all participants, presenters, keynotes, special interest groups (SIGs), and programme committee members who made Eurocall 2018 such a success. We would also like to thank the authors of the papers and the reviewers who put in their time and effort to ensure the high quality of the submissions. A big thank you goes to Sylvie Thouësny and Linda Bradley for their dedication to EuroCALL and its publications.

We hope you will enjoy reading this volume and that the insights into the current research agendas captured in the papers will move forward our thinking about how to futureproof CALL.

We look forward to seeing you at next EuroCALL conferences!